

Montessori Works

Background

Early childhood education and care services must comply with the Early Education and Care National Regulations 2011 and the National Quality Standard 2011 in the way they manage the collection of fees, and inform parents about this process including any pending changes to the fees.

Policy statement

This Policy details the Service's procedures in relation to fees, methods of payment and associated provisions.


Strategies and practices

- The Service's *Fee Policy* is explained to parents at enrolment, and the necessary paperwork relating to fees is discussed and completed.
- The Service notifies (in writing) parents of children enrolled at the Service, at least 14 days in advance, of any change that will affect the fees charged or the way in which the fees are collected.
- Prior to enrolling your child at the Service, you need to contact the Department of Human Services (Centrelink) on 136 150 to arrange your Child Care Subsidy (CCS). You can also submit your CCS claim online at:
<<https://www.humanservices.gov.au/individuals/services/centrelink/child-care-subsidy/how-claim>>

You will need to register a parent (only one parent needs to apply) and child with Centrelink in order to obtain a Customer Reference Number ('CRN') specific to the Parent and also to the Child (the CRN numbers will be 2 different numbers NOT the same numbers).

- Once you have given your details to the Service, they will put your details into the Child Care Management System and it will automatically calculate your subsidy. If your CRN has not been sorted through Centrelink – the Service can backdate up to 28 days. Until then, you are required to pay full fees.
- In order to receive the Child Care Subsidy, your child will need to be up to date with their immunisations.
- Before your child commences at the Service, parents are required to pay a bond of \$500.
- Four (4) weeks' written notice of intention to withdraw (or make changes to enrolled days) the child is required. The four weeks' notice begins from the close of business on the day the Service receives the written advice. Any monies owed to the parent, including the bond paid at enrolment, will be refunded on the child's final day of attendance at the Service.

Payment of Fees

- Fees are to be paid on or before the child's first day of attendance each week and can be paid only through our iPay system.
- Normal fees apply to public holidays, sick days, family holidays (more than four weeks in any financial year) and any other absence. Fees are not charged for days when the Service is closed outside of Public Holidays. Child Care Subsidy is paid for a child's absences up to 42 days per child each financial year, including Public Holidays. The Service does not exchange days of care and does not arrange make up days.
- Once every week, parents eligible for Child Care Subsidy are provided with a Statement of Entitlement. This statement includes details of the sessions of care provided and the resulting fee reduction amounts, and is based on information about entitlements and payments for each child received in their payment advice generated through the Services CCMS software program.
- Online Receipts are issued for all fee payments. The system-generated receipt will show the child's name, the period for which the receipt is issued, the amount paid, and all other details required by regulations. If an overpayment is made, no refund will be given but the excess will be credited to the family's account.
- Fee reminders are sent to any family one or more weeks' late in the payment of fees. If the fees are not paid within the following week or no arrangement for payment entered into, the child's place at the Service will be at risk.
- The Service requires a full four (4) weeks' written notice of an intention to change the days of attendance or the number of days required.
- Children should attend to the last day of the year and 2 months notice of withdrawal is required from 1 November each year.
- A late fee (as per the Fee Schedule) is charged for any child collected later than the Service's closing time (by the Service's clock). Parents are asked to complete and sign a Late Fee Notice when they collect their child/children. 

Additional safe practices for babies

- N/A

Responsibilities of parents

- To ensure fees are kept up to date
- To keep the Service informed of any changes in attendance (e.g. family holidays, other absences)

To respond promptly to communications from the Department of Human Services (Centrelink) to maintain CCS eligibility.

Procedure and forms

Payment of Fees

- Child Ceasing Care Administration Form
- Child Holiday Advice Administration Form
- Child Request for Altered Days of Attendance Form
- Fee Schedule
- Late Fee Notice

Links to other policies

- Attendance Policy
- Enrolment and Orientation Policy
- Interactions with Families Policy

Links Education and Care Services National Regulations 2011, National Quality Standard 2011

Regulation	168	Education and care service must have policies and procedures
Regulation	172	Notification of change to policies or procedures

NQS	QA6.2.2	Effective partnerships support children's access, inclusion and participation in the program
NQS	QA7.1.2	Systems are in place to manage risk and enable the effective management and operation of a quality service

Family Assistance Legislation

- *A New Tax System (Family Assistance) Act 1999*
- *A New Tax System (Family Assistance) (Administration) Act 1999*
- Child Care Subsidy Minister's Rules 2017 (Minister's Rules)
- Child Care Subsidy Secretary's Rules 2017 (Secretary's Rules)
- Any other instruments (including regulations) made under the *A New Tax System (Family Assistance) Act 1999* and the *A New Tax System (Family Assistance) (Administration) Act 1999*
- Schedules 5 and 6 to the *A New Tax System (Family Assistance and Related Measures) Act 2000*

Sources

- Education and Care Services National Regulations 2011
- Department of Education and Training (Australian Government).
- Guide to the National Quality Framework 2018 (September 2020 Update): Section 4 – Operational Requirements <https://www.acecqa.gov.au/sites/default/files/2020-09/Guide-to-the-NQF-September-2020.pdf>
- Department of Education Skills and Employment ACCS Child Wellbeing- <https://www.dese.gov.au/additional-child-care-subsidy/child-wellbeing>
- DESE Financial Hardship -<https://www.dese.gov.au/additional-child-care-subsidy/temporary-financial-hardship>
- DESE Transition to Work - <https://www.dese.gov.au/additional-child-care-subsidy/transition-work>
- DESE Grandparents - <https://www.dese.gov.au/additional-child-care-subsidy/grandparents>

Payment of Fees

Further reading and useful websites *(Consistent with the approach of the National Quality Framework, the following references have prioritised efficacy and appropriateness to inform best practice, and legislative compliance over state or territory preferences.)*

- Education and Care Services National Regulations 2011
- Guide to the National Quality Standard 2011

Policy review

The Service encourages staff and parents to be actively involved in the annual review of each of its policies and procedures. In addition, the Service will accommodate any new legislative changes as they occur and any issues identified as part the Service's commitment to quality improvement. The Service consults with relevant recognised authorities as part of the annual review to ensure the policy contents are consistent with current research and contemporary views on best practice.

Version Control

Version	Date Reviewed	Approved By	Comments/Amendments	Next Review Date
1	8 January 2018	Dr Brenda Abbey (Author)	Updated to changed NQF requirements 1 February 2018. Service to modify policies to its specific needs.	
2	10 January 2019	Dr Brenda Abbey (Author)	Updated to changed NQF and CCS requirements.	
3	6 September 2019	Dr Brenda Abbey (Author)	Updated references.	
4	13 May 2020	Dr Brenda Abbey (Author)	Updated references, particularly those related to Department of Education, Skills and Employment	
5	2 August 2020	Dr Brenda Abbey (Author)	Updated to include Family Assistance Law requirements. Included relevant Family Assistance Law in Sources and referenced Child Care Provider Handbook.	
6	30 December 2020	Dr Brenda Abbey (Author)	Updated references.	
7	May 2022	ACA NSW	Updated References Updated Child Care Subsidy Information Update assistance available from centrelink.	
8	August	Susan Chahwan	Adapted ACA NSW Policy	